

CONFIDENTIAL

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31 October 1951

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover
Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation
Department of Justice
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Hoover:

Thanks very much for sending me the study of Communist tactics for undermining public confidence in Government. This is a very informative and timely paper and I am grateful to you and Mr. DeLoach for keeping in mind my interest in this subject.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

Signed

W. A. Smith

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lcc - reading

lcc - official *w/ham*

lcc - Central Records

orig - addressee

FBI REVIEW COMPLETED

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**Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington 25, D. C.**

October 22, 1951

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
VIA LIAISON

*General Walter Bedell Smith
Director, Central Intelligence Agency
Administration Building
Room 123
2430 E Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C.*

Dear General Smith:

On August 25, 1951, you expressed to Mr. DeLoach your interest in the undermining tactics of the Communist Party, USA. There is being enclosed herewith a monograph on this subject which I feel will be of interest to you.

This monograph outlines the Party's current tactics and the tactics which will probably continue to be employed by the Party to undermine this government.

With assurances of my highest regards,

Sincerely yours,

J. Edgar Hoover

Enclosure

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MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL SMITH

Attached is a study prepared by FBI on Communist tactics for undermining confidence in Government. It was prepared by the Bureau when they were unable to locate in their files any CP literature which adequately covered this field.

Actually this report does not cover the standard, recognized tactics employed by Communists for undermining public confidence in any government at any period but treats specifically with various aspects of the current CP "peace offensive" in the US.

The final section, Tab A, deals with "Attacks on Public Institutions and Officials". However, it covers only Communist propaganda efforts to discredit:

- The FBI, police and judicial processes
- The Armed Services and the Pentagon
- Defense Mobilization Program
- US aims in Korean war

There is no reference to character assassination or smear campaigns such as were employed against Generals Marshall and MacArthur and Secretary Forrestal in an effort to destroy public confidence in government officials.

HJM

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UNDERMINING TACTICS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY, USA

OCTOBER, 1951



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
J. EDGAR HOOVER, DIRECTOR

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UNDERMINING TACTICS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY, USA

The entire program of the Communist Party, USA, has been directed toward undermining the confidence of the American people in its "capitalist dominated" government and thus to weaken the resistance of that government to the advance of World Communism. Therefore, the entire agitational program of the Communist Party is involved in the question: What are the principal ways in which the Communist Party, USA, might attempt to undermine confidence in the government of the United States?

This memorandum will attempt to outline the basic strategy of the Communist Party, the tactics which are currently being employed, and the tactics which may be looked for in the future.

THE BASIC ISSUE: THE PEACE OFFENSIVE

The core of Communist agitation in the United States since 1947 has been, and will continue to be, "the fight for peace." The word "peace" has dominated all recent Communist propaganda. Its importance was stressed at the most recent National Convention of the Communist Party, USA, held in New York City in December, 1950. Gus Hall, National Secretary, who delivered the principal speech, told the delegates: "The fight for peace must remain the central task of the Communist Party."

It is self-evident that, were the Communist Party to gain broad acceptance of its view that the world is divided into two camps, the United States heading the "war camp" and the Soviet Union heading the "peace camp," public confidence would be seriously shaken in the government of the United States. Therefore, the question proposed is: What strategy is being employed, and might be employed, to gain acceptance of this view?

Gus Hall, writing in the October, 1950, issue of "Political Affairs," instructed that this task be approached along the following lines:

He noted that American youth is "still full of illusions implanted by lectures and at school concerning the

United States being a non-imperialist good neighbor." He stated this indicated the need for "the most persistent simple and concrete exposure of the imperialist character of United States policy."

He described the "oppression" of the Negro people as the "most vulnerable spot in the armor of American imperialism." He said the Party must find effective ways of exposing the "demagogic line" of the American ruling classes, which promises the Negro eventual elimination of inequalities and discrimination. He said the Party must "hammer away at the fact that promises to the Negro mean nothing."

The third target selected by Hall is what he described as "the theory of the inevitability of World War III," which he said is especially strong in the ranks of youth. Thus, he instructed that it be "especially explained to the young people why war is not inevitable" and "how the only way they can get an early start in life is to defeat the warmakers."

The fourth point in Hall's program is directed toward the women. He said there is a need for much greater effort and attention to the development of the "broad peace movement among the women and a need for much greater contact of women Communists with the masses of American women."

The foregoing program outlined by Hall is, of course, only a phase of the Party's basic program referred to by the Party as "the economic struggle." The tactics of the Communist Party in this "economic struggle" are those of "partial demands" or "immediate needs." John Williamson, National Labor Secretary of the C. P., USA, until his recent imprisonment for a violation of the Smith Act, gave a rather concise description of these tactics: "Every Communist should be resourceful in working with his shopmates so as to earn their respect as a fighter for their immediate needs. In such an atmosphere he can bring forward, at least for discussion, arguments against the drive for war."

Hall cautioned the Party against two principal errors in applying these tactics. He said the first error was the tendency to ignore the "economic struggles," or to seek mechanically and prematurely to achieve a combination of the economic with the peace struggle, a policy which would isolate the Party from "the masses," and thus weaken "the fight for peace and democracy."

The other error, Hall described as the "tendency to consider the economic issue and struggles in themselves as being sufficient to bring the masses at some future date to an understanding of the need of fighting for peace." This, he said, would weaken the economic struggles themselves because "only the understanding and feeling of the masses that their living standards are in danger because of imperialist aggression and war preparations will impart to their daily fight for wages, etc., the necessary endurance, militancy and readiness to make sacrifices and to withstand the intimidation of the monopolies, the Administration and the labor lieutenants." This, however, means bringing in the war and peace issue in a propaganda and agitational way."

That, then, is the blueprint of the Party's strategy. Consideration should now be given to the tactics being employed to gain the Party's objective,

LABOR AND INDUSTRY

A guide to the Communist Party's present tactics in the ranks of labor and among industrial workers is found in an article which appeared in the Communist Party's leading theoretical organ "Political Affairs" in November, 1950. The author, John Williamson, then National Labor Secretary of the Party and its highest authority in that field, said:

"It is also important to advance the struggle for a correct political position against imperialist war by effectively linking it up with the struggle on issues the workers do understand more clearly - against wage freeze, controls, long-term contracts, abolition of the hiring hall, no-strike pledge or law, loyalty screening, Taft-Hartley Law, etc.

"While our Party must intensify the popularizing of a full rounded-out program against the American imperialist program and actions, Communists and those they influence in the trade unions must learn how to make partial issues that will move workers in a correct direction and develop mass support and struggle around them."

Thus, Williamson in the foregoing instructed that agitational work among industrial workers was to center on the partial issues enumerated. Subsequently, in the same article, Williamson told Communists in industry how to conduct themselves:

"1. The importance of each individual Communist developing the maximum initiative and resourcefulness in working with his shopmates in such a manner as to earn their respect as a fighter for their most immediate needs. Raising issues and slogans around which the workers in the shop can be united, creating an atmosphere wherein it will be possible to bring forward at least in discussion, if not for immediate action, propositions in support of peace and against all aspects of the war drive.

"2. We must help our comrades in the shop to establish close contact with those who are already more inclined to progressive thought through belonging to progressive organizations in the communities or reading progressive papers.

"3. We must guard against throwing our comrades in the shops (especially those in Right-led Internationals and locals) into the kind of activity which will lead to their dismissal from the job or expulsion from the unions.

"4. The task of developing militant workers into class-conscious workers and toward Party membership must be carried on systematically by discussions with individual workers, by small gatherings where Marxist literature is discussed, and by the spreading of basic literature as well as current material.

"5. It is imperative that our comrades, especially in the Right-led unions, constantly develop and bring forward new militant workers, both men and women, who will fight on issues, and that we carefully avoid creating situations

where our comrades constantly come forward themselves on every issue, thereby curtailing their own effectiveness.

"A fight to realize the above approach in the shops is in the last analysis decisive in the period ahead for our ties with the masses of the workers and against our isolation."

(Political Affairs, November, 1950, p. 53)

DOMESTIC AND LOCAL ISSUES

The Party's efforts to create an atmosphere into which the Peace issue can be introduced can be seen in its drive for "immediate needs" in local and domestic issues. The Party's lowest levels, the Sections and Clubs, are working diligently on such issues. For example: On January 27, 1951, the Communist Party organization in Montana was instrumental in having petitions distributed for signatures among the workmen of the Anaconda Copper-Mining Co., in Butte. These petitions urged the raising of old-age pensions in Montana, and an increase in State compensation for industrial diseases.

A meeting of the State Committee of the Communist Party in Wisconsin, held on February 25, 1951, discussed ways to stimulate thought against the Korean war. A campaign against higher cost of living, increased rents and high taxes, attributing these to the war program was advocated. In addition, it was suggested that in connection with the "draft" it be pointed out that this is a weapon which could be used to drive smaller farmers off the farms.

A major role in developing the Party's "immediate needs" program is played by the Party's "fronts." A list of such enterprises would serve no useful purpose in this memorandum since the device is well-known and the list extensive. However, to use one case as an illustration of the type of activity which the Party is constantly promoting in this field, The New York Tenants Welfare and Consumers Council, an organization reliably reported to be a Communist front, is the vehicle through which the Party in the New York area pushes cost of living issues.

It is of particular interest to note the tactics which have been ordered by the Party to combat the prosecution of its leaders.

Since prosecutions were initiated instructions have been issued to Section organizers that every member of the Party must join and spend the major portion of his time in a mass organization "for the purpose of getting his roots down among the people who would be concerned about him in the event he were arrested." A Section organizer in Los Angeles instructed the membership that every Communist must become "a key in a mass organization" to convince the members that the working people are the main targets and thus to obtain the support of all the workers to defend the Party and its members.

NATIONAL ISSUES AND NATIONAL GROUPS

The promotion of racial unrest and national conflicts in the United States has been in the past and will continue to be one of the Communist Party's most promising agitational areas. The Party's unflagging efforts to promote Negro unrest under the slogan of "Jim Crow" is perhaps the most familiar tactic. It is, however, only one phase of the racial-national program. The following illustrates generally the present tactics and those which may be looked for in the future in this field.

A word might be said concerning the organization which directs the Party's program among the national groups. The National Groups Commission, working under the National Committee of the Communist Party, USA, is reliably reported to have had, early in 1950, the following subordinate units which are referred to in the Party as committees or bureaus:

Puerto Rican - Spanish
Negro
German
Greek
Italian
Jewish
Hungarian
Yugoslavian

Finnish
Rumanian
Polish
Slovakian
Czechoslovakian
Lithuanian
Estonian
Chinese

A chain of newspapers controlled by this Commission, most of which are foreign language papers, and whose editors are called in regularly for a review of the line to be taken,

is the principal medium for disseminating the Party's propaganda among these groups. The value of reaching these people in their native tongue is evident.

The Party's utilization of the National groups organization is shown in the following:

By way of background, early in 1951, Eugene Dennis, General Secretary of the Communist Party, stated that, while the Party must not slacken in its efforts to reverse American policy in Korea and Communist China, nevertheless, the Party must concentrate on Europe which remains the "main front, the strategic arena." Soon thereafter James E. Jackson, Southern Regional Organizer of the Communist Party, USA, held a conference with district officers in Philadelphia on promoting the German rearmament question. It was decided at that meeting that this campaign should be run by "the Jewish Commission" (of the National Groups Commission) but that the committee setup should not be exclusively Jewish.

On the same issue of German rearmament, the Party's campaign in the New York City area was initiated on January 15, 1951, at a meeting which was held in the offices of the Morning Freiheit, a Communist-influenced Yiddish newspaper. A Communist-dominated union, The National Fur and Leather Workers, was employed as a front for this campaign, sponsoring a protest meeting, and issuing "a call to all Jewish mass organizations" in New York to participate.

This transparent attempt to entice non-Communist Jewish organizations to promote the Party's campaign against German rearmament illustrates its cynical exploitation of minorities.

The Communist Party is continuously exploring new possibilities in connection with this racial-national program. For example, Mexican groups in the West and Southwest have come in for considerable organizational attention in recent months. The Colorado State Convention of the Communist Party held in January, 1951, appointed a commission to "study the needs of the Mexican people" and to propose plans for successful work among them. Other State organizations of the Communist Party were, at the same time, giving attention to the Mexican problem.

The "Daily People's World," a west coast Communist

newspaper, on January 12, 1951, set forth the basic Communist approach to the Mexican groups: The Mexican people were once landowners but had their land wrested from them by American imperialists. They are looked upon now as "cheap labor" to be exploited by landlords, railroads and mining magnates.

Thus, earlier victims of "American imperialism" are looked upon as potential opponents of the current "American imperialism."

"American imperialism" is also the key to Communist agitational work among the Puerto Rican groups. The New York County organization of the Communist Party sponsored a mass meeting on December 27, 1950, before which Cesar Andreu, Chairman of the Communist Party of Puerto Rico, appeared as a speaker. Andreu accused the U. S. of imperialistic domination of the colonial people of Puerto Rico.

This appeal to nationalism among the Puerto Ricans is illustrated by a flyer issued by the New York County Organization of the Communist Party on January 11, 1951, which called for "independence for Puerto Rico now."

Even the Negro agitation is developed around the issue of "American imperialism." The State Secretary of the Communist Party in Illinois, Claude Lightfoot, in his speech in Chicago, November 10, 1950, stated that the treatment of fifty million Negroes in the United States is typical of what happens daily to the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin-America.

A leaflet issued by the Communist Party in Milwaukee early in 1951 promoted this line in its reference to "Wall Street's efforts to get the assistance of pardoned Nazi war criminals in the III World War against the new democracies and socialist countries and against the colored people of all continents - Jim Crow war to force Jim Crow on the world."

As in the Party's other areas of agitational work, the cultural program of the Party is designed to create an atmosphere into which the "peace" issue can be introduced.

The Communist Party's infiltration into the movie industry and the theater has been widely publicized, and the possibilities for using these media for Communist propaganda are quite apparent. It is worth while noting, however, that the Party's cultural program is not based exclusively on getting its ideas into the first-run productions of the motion picture industry nor on top-flight radio or television productions. Much of the Party's work in the field is directed towards lesser and more realistic objectives.

There is considerable integration between the cultural work and the work among the national groups. To illustrate, a concert and rally was held at the Yugoslavian-American Home in New York City on February 11, 1951, under the sponsorship of a Communist front organization, the American-Slav Congress. (Cited by the Attorney General as coming within the purview of Executive Order 9835.) The main speaker on this occasion attacked American foreign policy, and the administration of President Truman. It may be speculated, however, that many in the audience were attracted to this gathering in the hope of hearing some good music.

V. J. Jerome, Chairman of the Communist Party's Cultural Commission, at the last National Convention of the Communist Party held in New York City in December, 1950, urged the convention to undertake a program of selection and training of cadres, especially Negro women and youth for work in the cultural field. These, he said, must bring to the attention of the American people the role of the Soviet Union in the advancement of culture. In this connection Jerome spoke hopefully of the Party's progress in cultural organization, citing the growth of four Broadway theater movements termed by him as "popular" movements. It is believed that this illustrates the level on which much of the cultural work of the Communist Party is concentrated at the present time.

The pattern is apparent: Work in the shops, in the ranks of the housewives, among the underprivileged; promote racial, economic and social issues to create an atmosphere into which "peace" (Russian version) can be introduced.

ATTACKS ON PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND OFFICIALS

The basic program outlined in the foregoing is implemented by attacks on democratic institutions and the public officials who are charged with administering these agencies of the people. The range of such attacks encompasses every phase of government, federal, state and local, and it would not be feasible to attempt a study of these methods in their entirety. It appears that the Party has been leveling its principal attacks on the administration of three public enterprises: 1. Law Enforcement and the judicial processes; 2. The Armed Services; 3. The Defense Mobilization Program.

1. The Communist campaign to discredit the FBI has been going on for a long time but in recent months, with the initiation of prosecution against the leaders of the Party, it has become more violent. This campaign is probably one of the most familiar of the Party's tactics. It should be stressed here that the campaign against the FBI is only a phase of the Party's program to discredit law enforcement in general - from the police agencies to the court room. The "Daily Worker" hammers away at this vital institution on a day-to-day basis, guiding the members of the Party in their work in mass groups.

The recent disclosure of corruption in the New York Police Department, for example, has been given great prominence in the "Daily Worker" and the more recent dismissal of charges against 18 police officers in a state proceedings was the subject of an editorial in the "Daily Worker." Excerpts from this editorial are quoted below to illustrate the Communist Party's efforts to discredit all law enforcement by association and to associate corruption with the national defense effort:

"The law enforcement machinery can go into high gear at a moment's notice to frame innocent Negroes, to imprison Communists and other working-class leaders under the infamous Smith Act. But when it comes to actual violation of the law by 'law enforcement' officials themselves, what do we get? Kefauver hearings, TV spectacles, blaring headlines and then - phhhh.

"Where the original scandal involved the bribing of top police officials by the gamblers, now top officials themselves have evidently bribed and threatened the gamblers to shut them up.

"Corruption by government goes hand-in-hand with Jim Crow by government, and with witchhunt by government, with government preparations for war."

(Daily Worker, 9/21/51)

2. The Communist Party's efforts to discredit the Armed Forces of the United States take two principal lines:

- a. Lack of democracy in the Services. There are several themes used by the Party in promoting this "lack of democracy" line. The most familiar is its attack on segregation, officer's privileges and its promotion of enlisted men's grievances. Scarcely an issue of the "Daily Worker" can be found in which one or more of these "slants" are not given prominence.
- b. The second line of attack involves the catchword "Pentagon." Illustrative of this device are the following:

The United Nations armies in Korea are referred to as "the Pentagon armies"; the truce talks in Korea are being conducted by the "Pentagon's agents"; the "Pentagon" is responsible for continuing the bloodshed in Korea.

(Daily Worker, 9/13/51, 9/14/51, and 8/6/51 respectively)

The idea conveyed is, of course, essential to the Communist position - there is no popular support in the United States for the war in Korea.

3. Efforts to discredit the defense program are developed around this line: "Wall Street" and "big business monopolists" are profiteering at the expense of the workers. Corporate profits and the award of contracts to large companies are highlighted in the Communist press. For example, thirteen issues of the "Daily Worker" in July, 1951, displayed cartoons depicting the "profits grab," "Charlie Wilson's Gravy Train," and

other variations on this "profiteering" theme.

In summary, the Communist Party's strategy is to create an "atmosphere" in the United States into which the basic issue of "peace" (Russian version) can be brought forward. This is to be done by sharpening the "economic struggle" of the workers and advancing national and racial grievances wherever possible. The individual Communist is instructed to join one or more mass organizations -- labor, political or social -- and working from the inside to guide the organization on issues which tend to create the proper "atmosphere." Special attention is to be given youth, Negro and women's groups.

The importance of the Communist in industry is delineated by William Z. Foster, National Chairman of the Communist Party, USA:

"The Communist Party bases its work directly upon the mills, mines and factories. Its principle is to make every shop a fortress of Communism. ... It concentrates upon the heavy industries and those of a war character."

(Toward Soviet America, by William Z. Foster. International Publishers, 1932, p. 254.)

Thus, the Communist nuclei in industry are under instructions to conceal themselves, as they work to undermine the confidence of the American people in their government and economic system, as a basic step toward the creation of a revolutionary situation in the critical days which lie ahead.

Meanwhile, the picture the Communist Party is openly painting for its faithful, and which it hopes to market on a wider scale is this: The "Pentagon" is sending the workers and the workers' sons "to fight a rich, white supremacists' war" in Korea, while "big business" greedily rakes in the profits. Meanwhile popular unrest is suppressed by "mass jailings" of the leaders of the working class by the FBI.

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